

Assistive Technology Tools That Benefit ALL Learners



By Lourdes Day, FDLRS Technology Specialist and
Local Assistive Technology Team (LAT)

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Assistive Technology Definition (AT)

- Any item, piece of equipment or product system, whether acquired commercially or off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve the functional capabilities of a child with a disability.

- IDEA Section 602




Assistive Technology Service

- Any service that directly assists a child with a disability in the selection, acquisition, or use of an assistive technology device.



What this means

- Any tool or device a student with a disability uses to do a task that he/she could not do otherwise. It can make the task easier, faster or completed in a more efficient way.
- For some students AT is the only way for them to access the curriculum.
- The device can be “lite” tech such as a pencil grip or as high tech as a computer.




**Assistive Technology is a tool.
It will never replace good
teaching. It serves to give
struggling students and
those with a disability a way
to be successful within the
curriculum.**

Who benefits from Assistive Tech

- Any student with a disability from mild to severe
- Any student with reading, writing, math, communication, vision, hearing, or motor difficulties
- ESOL students
- Students with 504 plans
- Struggling students who do not qualify for ESE services





Did you know that the State of Florida allows a variety of assistive technology tools to be used on the FCAT by students with disabilities?

*These tools must be listed on the students' IEP **AND** be used daily as part of their instructional strategies.

Legal Responsibilities for ESE

- The school district is mandated by state and federal law (IDEA) to determine if a student with a disability needs assistive technology.
- The final determination of AT use is made by the IEP Team after an AT evaluation or IEP team consideration.





AT Legislation

- Tech Act (PL 100 407) Technology Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities Act
- ADA (PL 101-336) Americans with Disabilities Act
- IDEA-Individuals with Disabilities Education Act

*For more legislation information click on the link below

<http://atto.buffalo.edu/registered/ATBasics/Foundation/Laws/atlegislation.php>



AT Referral for ESE Students in Polk or Hardee

- A student may be referred by a teacher, therapist or parent.
- The school support team (i.e.... teacher, SLP, ESE Facilitator, parent, OT or PT) determines FIRST if the need can be met at the school level.
- If the need requires further support a referral is submitted to the Local Assistive Technology Team (LATS). Parent consent for evaluation must be obtained.
- The LATS will review the case and either request further information from the school or set up an appointment to evaluate the student.



The Local Assistive Technology Team (LATS)

Polk County

- Joanne Stidham- Speech/Language Pathologist (LEAD)
- Lorrie Prince –Speech/Language Diagnostician
- Judy Sanders- Occupational Therapist –ESE
- Lourdes Day- Technology Specialist-FDLRS Polk/Hardee

Hardee

- Teresa Hall- District Contact (Lead)
- Shannon Robertson-Teacher of the Visually Impaired
- Colleen Carey- Occupational Therapist
- Nancy Parker- Regional LATS

Contacting the LAT team



- The LAT team will evaluate, consult and train school staff. Contact them at :
- Polk ESE: 863-534-0930 (Joanne Stidham)
 - OR
- FDLRS: 863-647-4258 (Lourdes Day)
 - OR
- Hardee ESE: 863-773-2600 (Teresa Hall)

Assistive Technology Consideration



Ask the right questions?

- What specifically does the student need to do?
- What specific **IEP** goal must the child meet?
- What AT is the student currently using?
- What accommodations or modification strategies have been tried?



Accommodation vs. Modification

Good Strategies + AT = Success

- Accommodation is changing **HOW** the student is instructed and assessed
 - Example: Setting, time, length of assignment, AT
 - General diploma
- Modification is changing **WHAT** the student is expected to learn
 - Example: 4th grade math in an Algebra class
 - Special diploma
- Learn more about accommodation strategies-Click below
- <http://www.cpt.fsu.edu/ese/in/acom/needs/nslist.html>

AT Purchase for ESE Students

- The school district is required to provide assistive technology if it is necessary to meet IEP goals and receive FAPE.
 - The device may go home if the IEP team determines that it is necessary for the student to receive FAPE.
 - The device is the property of the school board.
- Some students may receive funds from private insurance or Medicaid.
 - These devices are the property of the family.



AT Acquisition for Non ESE Student

- School technology funds
- Other school funds
- Grants
- Community groups
- Fundraiser





Assistive Technology Groups

Two Major Groups

- Access Technology-devices that help a student access instructional material.
 - Can be used by all students
 - Alternate keyboard
 - Color filters, software....
- Adaptive Technology-devices which help an individual move about, communicate or control their environments.
 - Mostly used by students with a disability
 - Devices (Communication)
 - Teletypewriter



Assistive Technology Range

The need for AT is determined on a case by case basis; and ensures access to a free and appropriate public education as determined by the IEP team.

A student may benefit from:

- Lite/Low/Mid Tech Solutions
- High Tech Solutions



Lite/Low Tech Range

- Lite tech (LoTTIE Kit)

- Easily accessible
- Low cost
- Used by Peers

www.onionmountaintech.com (website for lite tech products)

- Examples:

- Color filters, reading guides
- Electronic dictionaries



High Tech Solutions

■ High Tech

- Very task specific
- Higher cost
- Sometimes makes student feel “different” from peers

■ Examples

- Computers, scanners, voice recognition software
- Individualized communication devices



Assistive Technology Can Help

- Reading
- Writing (Motor)
- Writing (Composing)
- Math
- Organizing/Studying
- Computer Access
- Communication
- Self Help/Daily Living Skills



Evaluation, Practice, Opportunities, and Review

- AT should be evaluated in the child's natural setting.
- Success of AT comes with daily opportunities to use the AT.
- AT must be an integral part of the curriculum.
- The technology needs to be continually monitored for its effectiveness.



Website References

- Lite Technology Solutions

- www.onionmountaintech.com

- Accommodations – Student Needs & Solutions

- <http://www.cpt.fsu.edu/ese/in/acom/needs/nslist.html>



AT Basics and Legislation

Assistive Technology Basics

<http://www.aten.scps.k12.fl.us/resources.html>

<http://www.wati.org/index.html>

■ **Legislation**

<http://atto.buffalo.edu/registered/ATBasics/Foundation/Laws/atlegislation.php>

<http://www.gpat.org/Resources%20Main.htm>